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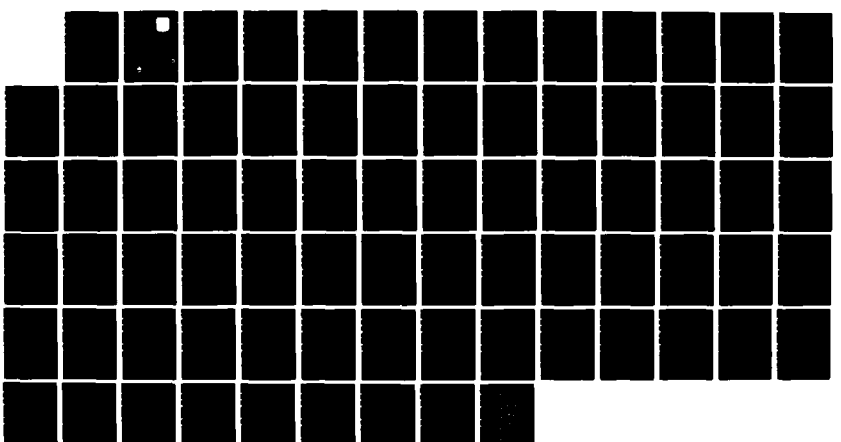

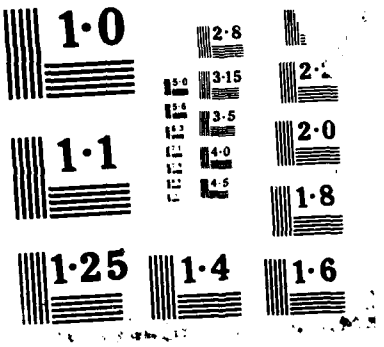
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STUDY PROJECT

WAR TERMINATION IN A LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL PAUL LEE, JR., USMC

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This paper examines low intensity conflict (LIC) and the crucial aspect of their termination. The purpose for this in-depth look at LIC termination is: first, because of the frequency of these conflicts since World War II and the prediction that they will continue to be the most likely type of war in the future; second, because of the Korean, Vietnam, and wars where the conflict continued well after military involvement should have ended;

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and third, because the subject has received little attention from military, political, and academic thinkers and writers. The paper begins with a LIC definition and a socio-historical explanation for the barriers to LIC termination. Next government policy and legislation are examined that have restricted military use and attempted to direct disengagement once they are employed. Next, LIC termination criteria at the national level is presented which incorporates the Weinberger Doctrine conditions and War Powers Resolution intent. The interrelationship between LIC conditions, war termination, and lack of national will are then focused upon. Finally, the problem is examined from the civil-political, JCS, and operational levels. The conclusions and recommendations punctuate the need for changes and additional study.

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WAR TERMINATION IN A LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Lee Jr., USMC

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ABSTRACT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

			Page
ABSTRACT			ii
CHAPTER	I.	INTRODUCTION	1
		Background	1
		Assumptions	6
		Purpose	7
	II.	LIC TERMINATION BARRIERS	9
		Uncertainty	9
		Allied Interests	10
		Mass Media	11
		LIC Peculiarities	14
		US Inclinations	16
		Domestic Politics	18
	III.	POLICY DOCTRINE AND LAW	24
		Guam Doctrine	25
		War Powers Resolution	26
		Weinberger Doctrine	29
		National Security Strategy	30
		Summary	31
	IV.	TERMINATING HOSTILITIES	34
		Military Situation Analysis	34
		LIC Termination Decision Criteria	36
	V.	WAR TERMINATION, NATIONAL WILL, AND LIC	46
	VI.	LIC TERMINATION AND THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL COMMANDER	50
		Five War Termination Questions	52
	VII.	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	60
BIBLIOGRAPHY			64
APPENDIX 1			67

WAR TERMINATION IN A LOW INTENSITY CONFLICT

CHAPTER I

> In planning to wage a war ... we must look to the peace to follow. A war of annihilation might possibly bring a pyrrhic military victory that does not make political and economic sense.
>
> Admiral Radford, 1949[1]

INTRODUCTION

The title "War Termination in a Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) immediately brings to mind a variety of images and controversial issues. These images and issues are critical as current events demonstrate. Today, one out of every four countries is involved in some limited conflict.[2] Thousands of US military have died in LICs and more will die. The most pressing question for our military and civilian leadership is "how and when to terminate these conflicts"?

BACKGROUND

Initially, a definition of the terms is needed for two reasons. The first is to eliminate any confusion and thus begin with a common basis for analysis, and the second, to highlight the unique characteristics of LIC. In particular, I want to concentrate on the LIC specific types of combat activities short of conventional war.

The current definition for LIC found in Field Circulars 100-20 and JCS Pub 1 reads that:

> LIC is a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, military, social, economic, or psychological objectives. It is often protracted and ranges from diplomatic, economic, and psychological pressures through terrorism and insurgency. It is generally confined to a geographic area and is often characterized by constraints on the weaponry, tactics, and level of violence. LIC involves the actual or contemplated use of military capabilities up to, but not including, combat between regular forces.[3]

To begin with, this definition is too broad. An indication of the scope can be gained by first reflecting on those military operations which are below conventional war and characterized as LICs. Specifically, some of them are peacekeeping operations, shows of force, escort duty, police actions, military advisors, terrorism, insurgency, evacuation of non-belligerents, and more. By covering too many activities, ambiguity is created. Ambiguity blurs the distinction between the various force options and the implications for the US. Each one of the military operations mentioned above require different considerations but may be viewed as comparable. Because of an inappropriate and unclear definition, the US is likely to wait for LICs to escalate before using military force.

Any research effort should initially be directed at systematically identifying the subject matter. Also, by concentrating on a definition we can better focus our attention on how to terminate LIC military use, and thereby remove the self-imposed handicap which keeps us from effectively using force to protect and further US interests.

I propose to define LIC in two ways -- by what it is not and then by what it is.

Low intensity conflict is not conventional war, that is, no direct conflict is expected or occurs between US forces and the forces of another sovereign nation. It is also not terrorism or any of the less violent activities. LIC is a gray area between conventional war and the other lower level conflicts. The figure depicts the relationship.

FIGURE 1

SPECTRUM OF CONFLICT

LIC

Normal Diplomacy	Peacekeeping Presence Civic Action	Subversion Sabotage Terrorism	Insurgency Guerrilla Ops	Conventional War	CBW	Nuclear War

Focusing on the spectrum of conflict above and considering the limited goals, means, and ways associated with LIC, I propose the following definition:

> LIC is a limited politico-military struggle to achieve political, military, social, economic, or psychological objectives. It involves the introduction of US armed forces into a geographic area where insurgent force hostilities are underway or are imminent as indicated by the circumstances. LIC's are restricted to force employments of 90 days or less and are subject to the War Powers Resolution. LIC's are characterized by casualties of less than 10,000 and constraints on weaponry and tactics. Decisive victories are not possible.

Several key points must be emphasized. First, forces are introduced into a hostile or imminently hostile environment. This statement removes any doubt about the purpose for the military forces and the ultimate response by the adversary.

Also, the forces are used in an specific geographical area. This qualification eliminates terrorism activities and world wide presence and shows of force as LIC. Second, objectives are limited. For an adversary, the conflict may not be limited. Initially I am dealing with the US perspective. Third, time is a most crucial element of the definition. Restricting LICs to 90 days before Congressional commitment is sought or forces withdrawn is consistent with the War Powers Resolution. It also addresses the basic criticism leveled at the military in particular, and the government generally, that we allow military use to go on and on without a plan to extricate them if objectives are not immediately achieved. Fourth, the political nature of LICs makes decisive victory as historically experienced in WW I and WW II impossible. This element of the definition complicates operations, because the adversary in an insurgency will trade space and terrain for time. The guerrilla or bands of armed civilians will avoid a decisive battle.[4] As Clausewitz writes, "A general uprising, as we see it, should be nebulous and elusive; its resistance should never materialize as a concrete body, otherwise the enemy can direct sufficient force at its core, crush it, and take many prisoners."[5] Fifth, and finally, casualties, means and ways must be limited otherwise any conflict by definition and situation is no longer low-intensity.

Clausewitz wrote that "each age has its own kind of war, its own limiting conditions, and its own preconceptions."[6] For the US in the 20th century and into the foreseeable future, LIC will be our own kind of war. Liddell Hart also recognized the

importance of LIC and explained the reason for the rise in the number of incidents when he wrote over 26 years ago:

> Campaigns of this kind are the most likely to continue because it is the only kind of war that fits the conditions of the modern age, while being at the same time well suited to take advantage of social discontent, racial ferment, and national fervors.[7]

These conflicts arise in or emanate from areas where there are real or perceived political, social or economic inequities; or ideological differences. Many times, the conflicts become ideological with democracy pitted against communism. The Soviet Union or its surrogates, not wanting to risk direct confrontation, use the opportunities provided by instability to undermine our interests or that of our allies. Most agree that LIC type activities are the most likely threat to the US' credibility and commitment to peace and security.

When the US has become involved in LIC, we have found it difficult to terminate military activities. In fact, we have allowed operations to reach a magnitude and duration far beyond our initial intention. Two recent and tragic experiences where the costs to terminate exceeded the objective were Korea and Vietnam. We looked for an easy triumph and it didn't happen.

The solution lies simply in understanding the limited objectives of LIC. A constant reassessment of the cost versus the objectives must be undertaken with objectivity and realism. Sometimes there will be no winners or losers; and that's all right or even preferred. Likewise, proving that you won may not only be irrelevant, but also impossible to determine. A second aspect of LIC is that although it may be limited in scale and

objective it may not always be so in duration. Successful termination acknowledges this aspect of LIC and plans for it. Should conditions change, the calculus of whether to quit or continue must be reconsidered.

ASSUMPTIONS

There is an assumption made throughout this paper that the military is and will remain subordinate to civilian leadership. Military strategy and objectives in LIC will support national interests and objectives. The defense role will be to adjudicate the assistance, forces, and policies of the civilian government. The military will not be advocates of force use but rather will advise on how force can be used effectively, whether it should be used and when it should be withdrawn.

It is also that the US believes in the primacy of the strategic offense and that LIC operations will be governed by this fundamental principle of war. Consequently, LIC also involves aiding anti-communist insurgents and reversing coups. Our assistance to the Nicaraguan contras is consistent with this principle. In that LIC does cover such operations, it should also be subject to the same scrutiny and considerations for termination.

The preceding assumption does not downplay the importance of defense. It may be of value for the US to employ defense initially dependent upon the circumstance. We have to appreciate the type of conflict that is taking place. As Clausewitz would write: "Was it a greater or lesser approximation to a war of

observation, or was it, on the contrary, one governed and saturated by the urge for a decision?"[8] This political consideration at the outset determines the strategy and leads to the development of the military plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to examine the problem of war termination in a low intensity conflict. The discussion is ordered from the national level down to the operational level. One chapter deals with the barriers to effective LIC termination. A second surveys the policy, doctrine, and law affecting LIC. Another chapter proposes national decision criteria for ending hostilities. The next chapter explains the interrelationships between LIC, war termination, and national will. Finally, I explore LIC termination as an operational level problem. In order to sharpen the discussion, I have pointed out the different perspective the operational level commander has compared to the civil-political and JCS levels. Five essential questions are listed for the commander's consideration and as a planning guide. The conclusion highlights the problems and the need for more study. The recommendations aim to improve the situation and government foreign policy flexibility. The ultimate aim is to strengthen the operational commanders position by forcing proactive peace planning.

CHAPTER I

ENDNOTES

1. Arthur W. Radford, Admiral, USN, From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam, edited by Stephen Jurika Jr. p. 153.

2. R. Lynn Rylander, The Future of Marines in Small Wars, p. 65.

3. US Department of the Army, TRADOC Field Circular 100-20, "Low Intensity Conflict," Headquarters, TRADOC, 16 July 1986), p v.

4. Clausewitz, Carl von, On War edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1976, p. 480.

5. Ibid., p. 481.

6. Ibid., p. 593.

7. Mao Tse-Tung and Che Guevara, Guerrilla Warfare, forward by B.H. Liddel Hart, p. xi.

8. Clausewitz, p. 488-489.

CHAPTER II

LIC TERMINATION BARRIERS

Terminating a conflict is a complicated process. Several factors combine to impede hostility cessation. The first factor is the inherent uncertainty and risk in any military operation. This factor is made more complex by the adversaries' perceptions and calculations which may be different from ours and change over time. The second factor involves participation of allies. They bring along concerns and goals which may impede negotiations for peace or troop withdrawal. The effective use of mass media and propaganda by underdeveloped countries is third. In spite of economic deficiencies, many Third World countries possess the wherewithal and organization to effectively transmit and distribute ideological propaganda. The US media is not controlled and views itself as the peoples guardian against government excess. Fourth, in LIC there are no decisive battles or engagements, hence no clear victory. The fifth factor is the US approach to warfighting and winning. And, the final factor is the perplexing issue of domestic politics.

UNCERTAINTY

Clausewitz wrote that "War is the realm of chance. No other human activity gives it greater scope. No other has such incessant and varied dealings with this intruder"[1] Chance interferes with the course of events and causes continuous change and the whole course of the conflict may be altered. Uncertainty

about the execution of the conflict and the constant change in goals and objectives is likely to extend a conflict well past its original intent.

Clausewitz makes another relevant observation that bears on conflict termination. He writes: "In war, the will is directed at an animate object that reacts."[2] The adversary has goals, objectives, and perceptions too. They will act and react. Both belligerents experience emotional swings which cloud judgment and cause a loss of balance. Unless there is an agreement between the two conflicting parties and an overlap of acceptable conditions, then there is no incentive to stop fighting.[3] In this environment an overture of peace may be viewed as a weakness or as an opportunity by one of the parties to exploit further advantages or to reverse losses. The emotional or even calculated reaction might then be to continue the struggle. Therefore, the key question is how to realize our objective, by forcing our will on the enemy and thus eliminating non-conformity. In LIC, this is not always possible because of our self-imposed restraints on ways and means. Another profound difference is that most US conflicts since World War II have involved allied interests, troops or both. The addition of extra interests further complicates the calculus.

ALLIED INTERESTS

The US has demonstrated in the past that it will commit military forces to protect its allies or their interests. This principle requires that the allies be considered when an attempt to stop or withdrawal from a conflict is advised.

Clear decisions and unanimity will be difficult to attain. Allies bring their own agenda into a conflict. Depending on their contribution or the impact of the struggle on them politically, economically or socially, they may agree or disagree with a termination of hostilities decision or even negotiation. Since most judgments are subjective and highly conjectural, we can never know just where our allies will stand. In any dispute - if the matter is of vital importance to allies - concurrence on an objective will not normally result unless both states agree to submit to the ruling of the leading state. A basic hindrance is the lack of recognition of the superior authority of one ally over another. Cooperation between and among the US and its allies has improved since WW II. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that US interests in such matters as military intervention and withdrawal will be unconditionally supported by our allies in the future. This statement's rationale may seem depressing, but without a doubt it is the media's influence on public opinion and support that poses an even greater barrier to successful conflict negotiation and termination.

MASS MEDIA

One of the most intriguing aspects of modern times is the relationship between the military and the people. Without popular support, it is commonly suggested and emphasized by policy makers that the military can't succeed. Since WW II this relationship has been influenced by the media. It is blamed for poisoning the minds of the American people against the military

and military operations. For many military it is the media who are the villains and even the adversary. This section explores these assertions and appraises them based on Clausewitz's On War. The Vietnam War is a quintessential example for the appraisal of the power of public opinion and the strength of the modern media.

Clausewitz establishes a "paradoxical trinity" among the people, government and the army.[4] This point is a dramatic one for the military leader and deserves some reflection. The people provide the passion in war. This character, Clausewitz writes, is inherent in the people.[5] The implications of this statement are many, but the major point that can be extrapolated is that the will and support of the people are absolutely essential if the military is to have any assurance of success. Following this line of logic, if the people's support is shaken or lost, the government has no choice but to end a conflict before the objectives are achieved.

Keeping this point in mind let's turn again to Clausewitz to investigate yet another relevant concept - center of gravity. The center of gravity is a country's source of strength and balance. It is the point where a decisive victory can be attained and is the focus of all operations.[6] Identifying the center of gravity requires extensive knowledge of the physical and psychological strengths and weaknesses of a country.

Clausewitz gives several examples of the psychological or, as he calls them, moral elements that constitute centers of gravity.[7] These are identified as the common interests of allies, the personalities of the leaders, and public opinion.[8] It is against these elements that Clausewitz recommends that a

warring nation's energy can be directed, and that blow after blow be aimed in the same direction.[9] The US unfortunately has experienced this Clausewitzian paradigm all too well, particularly with regards to public opinion which has paralyzed our capability to protect our security interests in LICs and proved to be a decisive factor during the Vietnamese War.

If the American achilles heel is public opinion then the molder and shaper of public opinion is the media. This statement's implications are fascinating and highlight the basic point that the media has influential and persuasive powers.

The US public was attuned to the reporting on the Vietnam War. The North Vietnamese people were not. A basic asymmetry existed and still exists. The media in a totalitarian state supports its policies and is an instrument of the government. US and western media try to objectively keep society informed and check government excesses. Consequently, the US public was bombarded by in-depth, critical media coverage and even propaganda. As the Vietnamese War dragged on, public opinion was influenced and turned against the military effort. North Vietnam had targeted US public opinion, controlled its own media, and counted on the US media to sway US public support. Henry Kissinger would write that the negotiation task with Le Duc Tho would drag on for three years while the US media tried the war in the public domain.[10] In the end the US would have to set aside its policy goals in order to negotiate an end.

Two factors converge to hinder LIC termination. First, in the battle of patience the US will usually lose. Second, as we

are hammered by a critical media, public opinion and patience is traumatized to the point that national and military objectives may be vacated and negotiations dragged out.

LIC PECULIARITIES

There is a tendency to view low-intensity conflict in a traditional sense as a sub-category of conventional war. It is not that! These conflicts are not only geo-political and international but an outgrowth of despair and response to inequity. To understand the nature of low-intensity conflicts requires reading Clausewitz's chapter on "The People In Arms," as well as Mao and his disciples Che Guevara and Castro.

In writing about insurgency, Clausewitz pointed out that this type of warfare had conditions and objectives peculiar to itself. Mao, Che and Castro extended the uniqueness of insurgency to terrorism and subversion. The roots of these conflicts, the guerrillas write, are in the society and people, and result from the exploitation and injustice they experience or perceive.[11] In other cases, one nation may invade another as in Korea and Vietnam in order to spread an ideology or make economic gain.

Basically, an insurgent or terrorist avoids contact with large military forces preferring to attack weak spots. Che Guevara writes "that the enemy falls when the process of partial victories becomes transformed into final victories, that is to say when the enemy is brought to accept battle in conditions imposed by the insurgent, there he is annihilated and his surrender compelled."[12]

Clausewitz writes that limited conflicts are operationally unsuited to major actions that are clearly compressed in time and space but not strategically. Like the process of evaporation, he continues, its effect depends on the extent of its surface. The greater the surface and the greater the contact with the enemy, the greater the armed populace's effect will be, because the enemy will have extended himself.[13] These irregular operations lead to a protracted conflict which require considerable time to reach a culminating point if it can be obtained at all for either party.

What are the salient points here with regards to conflict termination? There is always a political goal involved. The goal is powered by ideas, nationalism, and envy brought about by severe economics and other inequalities. The guerrillas and their supporters are prepared to endure a long conflict and will avoid direct military encounters. No decisive victory is possible because guerrillas avoid major confrontation.

The message is clear. Peaceful endings of its insurgencies cannot be facilitated through military force alone. Diplomacy and economic reform must be coupled with political concessions and considerations. Moreover, these conflicts will last a long time. The US must be prepared to commit itself to a long struggle. Termination activities will most likely be drawn out for several reasons; whether to gain an advantage, because of relative power relations, or the because of characteristics of the leadership on both sides. The dialectical process involves a high degree of uncertainty which is exacerbated by cultural and

historical experience.

It is precisely the US' approach to war and winning which makes conflict termination so difficult. There are a number of loosely connected elements which produce tendencies that go back to the founding of this nation. Taken in combination, however, these elements help explain the US view toward military use, non-use, or withdrawal.

US INCLINATIONS

De Tocqueville, in writing his seminal work Democracy in America, stated: "There are two things which a democratic people will always find very difficult - to begin a war, and to end it."[14] He justifies this statement by making the observation that war disrupts the general economic process and prosperity of individuals. Therefore, the US will usually postpone or avoid military use. A decision to use force is the last resort. This reluctance to enter a conflict necessitates that the ending be decisive and that the adversary be punished and taught a lesson. The most popular wars in the US experience have been wars of dedicated political purpose. The nation mobilized and embarked on a crusade. The total annihilation of the enemy's forces was the objective. Every means available to the nation was employed to this end. This trend reached its zenith in World War II.

The preference for decisive, total war where peace was made unconditionally, was reinforced by another peculiar national element, which is an unbeatable spirit rising from a national feeling of invincibility. However, this attitude suffered a serious setback in Korea and Vietnam.[15] These two wars brought

to the forefront the third element of the US national character - antimilitarism.

Antimilitarism is related to the militia mentality. Basically, the US believes that when threatened the people will unite to defeat the common enemy and then return to peaceful pursuits. This faith in the militia coupled with the antimilitarism has intended to entrench the US military and to spawn in them a defensive if not guarded attitude.

Military people live in a world of ordered, regulated, almost decorous competition. They thrive in war professionally because they can get ahead. Military honors and resources are linked to their wartime successes. De Tocqueville noted that the desire of the military leadership to get ahead produces excesses in the conduct of war and punctuates their reluctance to end it.[16]

All too frequently warfare is viewed as a zero-sum game where one nation's gain is the other's symmetrical loss. The problem is that successful termination of hostilities with limited objectives presupposes winning being measured in adjustments at the margins of a dispute.

It is the combination of the five elements - the American democratic tradition, the war winning experience, anti-militarism, a militia tradition, and the military professionals mentality that has had an ambivalent effect on our approach to war and war termination. If there are no total wars that we can afford to fight again then what is left are low-intensity conflicts. My concern is that as a result of our attitudes

toward war, we will hesitate to use force effectively and when we do, we will be unable to stop at the appropriate time. These attitudes are reflected in and magnified by our domestic political system.

DOMESTIC POLITICS

Over one-third of the expressed powers in the US Constitution are devoted to military matters. US defense issues are inseparable from domestic politics. The implication is that conflict termination will be subject to the fluctuations and tension ever present in a democratic, representative system. Bureaucratic politics and intra-government struggles can be translated as balance of issues which all influence war termination.

Article 1 Section 8 of the Constitution gives the Congress the power to raise and support armies, to make rules for the governing and regulation of the land and naval forces, and to make all laws which shall be necessary for carrying these rules into execution. The president is designated commander-in-chief of these forces and executor of foreign policy. The relationship established by the constitution promotes conflict between the legislative and administrative branches. These disputes have been sharp since Korea and stalemates have been commonplace.

In addition to the institutionalized political discourse and conflict, there have occurred significant changes in the composition and character of the Congress. Demographically, it is a younger group with less military experience. This trend is likely to continue. For the US military leadership and war

termination process it means that DOD will no longer enjoy the benefit of a Congress with personal familiarity of military processes and a common ground for discussion. Secondly, the US Congress has larger staffs who help them micromanage and exert influence well beyond their numbers. With fewer fiscal resources available it is also fair to assume that politics will intervene in military operations even more.

The close interplay between politics and the military completes the "remarkable trinity". In fact, there is a symbiotic relationship between the military and the government. Clausewitz has written about the importance of this interplay. His comments not only accept the dominance of politics in war but also in the peace process. For Clausewitz, the interplay was not a barrier but the source of rationality. He wrote:

> Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political objective, the value of the objective must determine the sacrifices to be made for it in magnitude and also in duration. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow.[17]

However, I don't think even Clausewitz could have envisioned the power or exhibited the political sensitivity inherent in US politics. This is particularly indicative of the US Congress. Clausewitz's experience was with totalitarian regimes wherein single actors played the predominant role. The complicated internal struggles among the US Congressional leadership, the military, and the administration are a unique historical evolution that has matured in the 20th century.

This government evolution has had a dramatic impact on the "art of war" and the administrative of peace. Government competition arising from political uncertainties about elections and voter perceptions impacts on the decision to make peace and the process that gets a nation there. Suffice it to say, that by our own design we have slowed the bureaucratic process that leads to peace. The system is designed to allow for immediate transition from peace to war but drags when turned in reverse. When facing LIC, this inability to remove armed forces at the right time has had tragic consequences. This is true for those cases like Vietnam and Korea where the expenditure of effort eventually exceeded the value of the object. It is also true that a bogged down, ineffective peace process ultimately generated policy which severely restricts the use of military force in the first place. Evidence will be presented in the next chapter to substantiate this latter statement.

Clausewitz placed emphasis on the need to evaluate the costs of the political objective particularly in military terms. Politicians are sensitive to political risk. They change their war termination calculations slanting them in an illogical way. At best, one can only hope that their subjective analysis will proceed after an acknowledgment of the political bias so that a rational strategy for peace will follow. The US' experience has demonstrated that more intellectual energy needs to be devoted to achieving and maintaining a balance between political concerns and national objectives. It would be mistake to conclude, however, that our system is the problem.

Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts suggest that considerable evidence shows that many US politicians had concluded that the Vietnam War was a mistake based on intuitive cost-benefit analyses and moral values long before it was over.[18] These politicians came out against the war when their constituents expressed their concern over US policy there. When the number of congressmen with constituencies against the war became the majority in 1973, then and only then was their action to mandate an end to American involvement.

In general, Gelb and Betts concluded that the US political-bureaucratic system worked as it was designed.[19] One can't argue with this assertion, for indeed, the purpose of checks and balances and frequent elections is to produce tension through competition and a sensitivity to public opinion. What was demonstrated, however, was the inability to terminate a conflict in an expeditious manner when the costs exceeded the benefit.

There are several other examples of wars wherein domestic politics influenced the outcome. The two most notable besides Vietnam are the War of 1812 and the Korean War. The conclusion drawn from these conflicts is that domestic support is absolutely critical, and that military action and conflict termination are subordinate to internal politics. The controversy over the Wars Power Act symbolizes just how important domestic politics are and supports the notion that congressional involvement is a healthy challenge to the system. The consequences of the War Powers Act and other policies and laws to conflict initiation and termination will be addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

ENDNOTES

1. Clausewitz, p. 101.

2. Ibid., p. 149.

3. Morton H. Halperin, "War Termination as a Problem in Civil-Military Relations" in The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. How Wars End. November 1970 Special Editor, William T.R. Fox, The American Academy of Political and Social Science, Philadelphia, p. 87.

4. Clausewitz, p. 89.

5. Ibid.

6. FM 100-5 Operations, 5 May 1986, Headquarters Department of the Army, p. 179.

7. Clausewitz, p. 97.

8. Ibid., p. 596.

9. Ibid.

10. Henry Kissinger, White House Years, p. 1355.

11. Mao Tse-Tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, Translated and with an introduction by Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, USMC (R) (Frederick A. Praeger, New York) 1961, pp 3-10.

12. Che Guevara, Guerrilla Warfare, p. 75.

13. Clausewitz, p. 480.

14. Alexis De Tocqueville, Democracy in America quoted in National Security and American Society, Theory, Process and Policy, Frank N. Trager and Philip S. Kranenberg (ed), p. 125.

15. Robert Leckie proposes that the US is reluctant to use military force also, but once it does it is violent and complete. He chronicles all US wars beginning with Champlain and ends with Vietnam. His discussions of Vietnam and Korea are particularly painful since it is so obvious that our inability to extricate ourselves spawned by the ambiguity of ends and means extended both wars.

Robert Leckie, The Wars of America, pp. 1-1121.

16. De Tocqueville, p. 125.

17. Clausewitz, p. 92.

18. Leslie Gelb and Richard K. Betts, The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked, p. 363.

19. Ibid., p. 364.

CHAPTER III

POLICY DOCTRINE AND LAW

In order to deal with the difficulties in ending limited conflicts, the US government has issued policy doctrines and passed laws. The doctrines and laws have been knee-jerk reactions to conflicts that lasted longer than they were expected. It is important to note that these reactions stressed limiting, even restricting military force employment. Specific reporting requirements were also instituted to ensure that reviews were conducted. Conditions were published to force withdrawal of military forces when public opinion, as expressed through elected officials, condemned the action.

Assuming that military force may be used as the instrument of last resort, one may reasonably expect that its use will be justified and supported by the American people. The responsibility then for ending such employments still falls upon the policy makers and military leadership. Nevertheless, an understanding of the US response to the difficulties of ending limited intensive conflicts is worthy of review. An historical perspective is a prerequisite for avoidance of the conditions which produced the excesses and failures of the past.

The Guam Doctrine or Nixon Doctrine of 1969 set the foundations for subsequent legislation and doctrine governing the US response to LIC. It was followed by the War Powers Resolution, the Weinberger Doctrine, and the January 1987 statement of the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Each one of these documents are related to conflict termination. They are concerned with the conditions of using or not using military forces in a conflict. The goal was to lessen the dilemma for conflict termination by restricting and restraining the employment of military forces. The Guam Doctrine was the initial document which set the stage for many others to follow.

GUAM DOCTRINE

While traveling through the South Pacific basin in July 1969, President Nixon made the following statement during a stop in Guam:

> In the past our policy had been to furnish the arms, men and material to help other nations defend themselves against aggression. That was what we had done in Korea and that was how we started out in Vietnam. But from now on, we would furnish only the material and the military and economic assistance to those nations willing to accept the responsibility of supplying the manpower to defend themselves.[1]

The fundamental thrust of this statement and what has become the cornerstone of US strategy ever since is that the military in the countries threatened by insurgency will provide their own security with US material assistance.

Obviously, the US citizens did not want "another Vietnam" and this policy was aimed at insuring that direct application of US military power would not happen again.

The Nixon Doctrine was a response to a very serious situation. It reflected a shift in thinking about war and resorting to military force. Indeed, the doctrine prohibited military involvement.

There were two problems with the doctrine. In essence it denied the president the opportunity to use one of the instruments of power. As a result, it sent an unclear message to friends and foe alike. The question that had to be asked was, could the US be counted on to support a friendly government when that government's very existence was threatened? Furthermore, the presumption underpinning the doctrine was that material aid was all that a fledging ally needed to counter internal or external aggression. This was clearly not a viable presumption. Secondly, the doctrine does not obligate future presidents and therefore lacked the permanency of law. The President and Congress struggled with the issue into the 1970's.

WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

Ultimately, over the President's objection the Congress passed and enacted the War Powers Resolution of 7 November 1973. Careful reading of the resolution reinforces the hypothesis that Congress was cynical regarding any president's ability to end LICs. Therefore, they required the president to consult them before introducing forces "into hostilities or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances", and to provide a written report within 48 hours and additional reports at specific intervals setting forth the circumstances necessitating the force introduction, the authority under which the introduction took place, and the estimated scope and duration of the hostilities or involvement.[2] The Congress didn't stop here.

The War Powers Resolution further addressed the issue of termination. It directs the President to withdraw US Armed Forces within sixty to ninety calendar days after the required initial report is submitted unless Congress has declared war or has enacted a specific authorization for the use of military force, extended by law the sixty day period, or is physically unable to meet as a result of an armed attack on the US.[3] The president must in any case immediately withdraw troops if directed to do so by a concurrent resolution which is not subject to a presidential veto.

The resolution's purpose was to have the Congress share in the decision to introduce combat forces into hostilities. Even the termination problem received attention. This statement of purpose is at best a wish. The president's powers remain constitutionally unaffected. In fact, since the passing of the resolution there have been a substantial number of deployments which were not considered "newsworthy" enough to warrant documentation.[4] A small sampling of the deployments considered nonapplicable include: unarmed reconnaissance flights over Cambodia in 1974 and 1975, the evacuation of civilians from Lebanon on 20 June and 26 July 1976, the augmentation of USAF aircraft in Korea as a result of US military personnel attacked during a tree pruning incident in the DMZ on 17 August 1976, and the airlift of Belgian and French forces to Zaire in mid-May 1978.[5]

Of particular interest are the 19 cases since 1973 which were "sufficiently noteworthy" to fall under the provisions of the resolution. The table below summarizes and breaks down those

19 cases that were reported and not reported by the President according to the resolution:

Table I.

Cases Involving the Use of American Forces Abroad 1973-1987, Reported or Not Reported Under the Provisions of the War Powers Resolution.

Reported	Not Reported
	Cyprus (1974)
Danang (1975)	
Cambodia (1975)	
Saigon (1975)	
Mayaquez (1975)	
Lebanon (1976)	Korean DMZ (1976)
	Zaire (1978)
Iran (1980)	
	El Salvador (1981 -)
	Libya/Sidra (1981)
Sinai MFO (1982 -)	
Lebanon/PLO (1982)	
Lebanon/MNF (1982-84)	
	Central America (1983 -)
Chad (1983)	
Grenada (1983)	
	Saudia Arabia (1984)
	Persian Gulf (1987 -)

Source: USAWC Selected Readings, Academic Year 1988 Course II, Vol. II p. 73.[6]

Eleven cases were reported and eight were not. Of the eight not reported three cases still involve the use of US force.

The conclusions are obvious. The War Powers Resolution makes it more difficult for the president to get troops directly involved in hostile actions abroad for long periods of time. It clearly offers an incentive to remove troops in spite of success or failure. In effect, it lessens the president's responsibilities for troop commitment and withdraw, after 90

days, if he chooses to accept the conditions of the resolution at all. The table also highlights the termination dilemma. The only instances where American forces are still involved after 60 - 90 days are those not reported under the provisions of the resolution.

The watershed document for the many policy changes since Vietnam is the Weinberger Doctrine. By accepting it the President endorsed a doctrine that made it nearly impossible to use military forces. The basic philosophy is that it's safer to do nothing than to undo something. The president later restated the Weinberger Doctrine in his 1987 National Security Strategy Statement.

WEINBERGER DOCTRINE

The Weinberger Doctrine, "On the Use of Military Power", first articulated in October 1984, requires that six conditions be met before military forces are used:

(1) The vital interests of the United States or its allies must be at stake.

(2) Sufficient force should be applied to unequivocally reflect the intention of winning.

(3) Political and military objectives must clearly be defined.

(4) The US involvement must be continuously reassessed to keep cause and response in synchronization.

(5) Before troops are committed, there must be a reasonable assurance of support from American public opinion.

(6) A combat role should be undertaken only as a last resort.

These six conditions were not met in the majority of instances provided in Table I. Strict adherence to the doctrine would all but eliminate military use as an instrument of foreign policy on a larger scale.[7] This is the essence of the problem faced by policy-makers and it became the cornerstone of the National Security Strategy of 1987.

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY, JAN. 87

The Reagan strategy in low intensity conflicts is to introduce military force "only as a last resort and when vital national interests cannot otherwise be adequately protected."[8] There are words of caution in the President's strategy. Specifically, he reminds us that LICs are frequently protracted struggles and that we must be patient. It is further stated that it is important to prevail and that to do so may not be easy or quick.[9]

This strategy relies primarily on economic and diplomatic persuasion, coaxing, cajoling, and bargaining to further US international interests. By relegating military use to an instrument of last resort, the geo-political influence of the US is reduced. Our world leadership potential is lowered because of a fear arising from the inability to end LIC.

It is not surprising that doctrine and law have dealt with military actions, both proposed and undertaken, and will continue to do so. The US should expect responsibility and accountability in these matters. Because forces will be used in spite of the adversity towards their employment, we must contend with the difficult task of removing our troops at the earliest possible

time. Following this, we should substitute to the greatest extent a combination of political, economic, and diplomatic efforts. It is a national foreign policy tragedy that we are unwilling to accept a military failure, and not know when and how to quit intelligently when we can't win militarily.

SUMMARY

The limitations imposed by doctrine and strategy have dire consequences for LIC termination. By reserving use of the military as an instrument of last resort conflict is allowed to escalate to the final stages of an insurgency. By that time the insurgent presents a major threat to US interests and the government we support. For the US it means greater risk of failure and a significantly higher cost in lives and money.

Our adversaries both big and small are aware of US doctrine and the propensity to reserve military force as an instrument of the last resort. The evidence suggests that guerrillas will exploit LIC because the risk is minimal and the rewards substantial. The US must recognize the danger of such doctrine and develop a more pragmatic approach. I suggest that the Weinberger Doctrine be dismissed. The US should embrace a policy which creates uncertainty in the minds of adversaries and opens the way for leadership and creativity in the conduct of foreign policy.

Continuing with this concept, a doctrine might be developed that addresses how to terminate LICs. This is not a reversal on my part from the previous argument. In some areas, doctrine can

play a vital role particularly if it is used to achieve purposeful direction and focus on responsibilities. As Henry Kissinger would write in his book Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, strategic doctrine explains "... the significance of events in advance of their occurrence and enables society to deal with most problems as a matter of routine..."[10] It is my contention that if we develop a doctrine for war termination we will have guidelines that will direct intellectual energy and imagination. Doctrinal guidelines will institute war termination planning prior to and during a conflict. Also, a War Termination Doctrine by defining responsibility could include Congress in the process and thereby enhance the intent and conditions of the War Powers Resolution.

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

1. Richard Nixon, The Memoirs of Richard Nixon, p. 395.

2. U.S. Congress, "War Powers Resolution" Public Law 93-148, 93rd Congress, H.J. Res. 542, November 7, 1973, from U.S. Army War College Selected Readings; Academic Year 1988; Course 2, War, National Policy and Strategy, Volume II, Carlisle, PA., 1 Aug. 87, p. 58.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 72.

5. Ibid., p. 73.

6. Ibid.

7. Michael I. Handel, "The Future of Dominant Subordinate Systems," from U.S. Army War College Selected Readings; Academic Year 1988, Course 2, War, National Policy, and Strategy, Volume I, Carlisle Barracks, PA. 1 August 87, p. 25.

8. National Security Strategy of the United States, January 1987 (Washington D.C. The White House, January 1987) p. 34.

9. Ibid.

10. Henry Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, 1957, pp. 403-4.

CHAPTER IV

TERMINATING HOSTILITIES

When does one terminate hostilities in a limited intensive conflict? How can we be sure that we will recognize when conflict termination should be negotiated or unilaterally decided? Answers to these questions are not easy but are indispensable.

To know when a conflict should be terminated requires rational thought and criteria. Low intensity conflicts are particularly troublesome because they invoke more emotionalism and divergent views than do conventional wars. There are usually competing principles and ideologies involved which cloud issues and thinking. Nevertheless, this does not imply that rational thought is not possible or that a decision to continue a LIC is somehow nonsensical. It is fair to assume that our leadership will behave rationally and in the best interest of our country, the host country, and our allies in such matters.

Deciding when to terminate a conflict requires reflection on a number of criteria. There are criteria regarding the adversary's military condition and criteria which the supporting country must take into account. A complete analysis must consider both. The process alone is worth the extra effort.

MILITARY SITUATION ANALYSIS

Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, USMC, Retired developed ten determinants which he said if properly considered

could predict the outcome of a military insurgency. The ten determinants are:

1. appeal of insurgent's program,
2. popular support,
3. quality of troops,
4. military efficiency,
5. internal unity,
6. morale,
7. equipment,
8. base area terrain,
9. base area communications, and
10. sanctuary.

He weighed the determinants on a scale from zero to ten where ten was the most favorable. By applying this calculus to Cuba and Vietnam under the French in the 1950's, he suggests the outcome could have been predicted long before the final results were in.[1]

Although the determinants provide an initial step for analysis of the military situation, they fail to consider the external influences which are so important for the US. Also, several of his determinants, such as readiness or troop morale are difficult to measure, and call for risky conclusions to be made by a military analyst. The consideration of these determinants for both the enemy and friendly forces is a first step in bringing about reflection on where one stands militarily and whether a military objective can be attained. This sobering truth, if honestly accepted, can provide a catalyst for an objective change or development of a possible conflict termination strategy.

As previously discussed, the most important considerations for the use or withdrawal of US forces are politics and domestic internal support. There is a cause and effect relationship between the military situation and these vital considerations. The US can be winning militarily as we were in Vietnam and discover that popular support for the military situation has more of an impact on the use of force and a termination decision than any single military strategic or tactical condition.

LIC TERMINATION DECISION CRITERIA

The following criteria are offered for analysis when deciding when to terminate a low intensity conflict.

TABLE II

CRITERIA FOR CONFLICT TERMINATION

Criteria	Questions to be Asked
1. Time	How long have we been involved? What is a realistic assessment of how much longer it will take to achieve the military objective?
2. Cost	Do the human, military and financial costs outweigh the expected benefits? Will continuation of fighting help or should we cut losses?
3. Allies's Support	Do we have allied support in and out of the region in which the conflict is being fought? What is the prospect for continued support? Do allies wish to negotiate termination?
4. Domestic Support	Do we have the support of the Congress, people, and press? What is the future prognosis?

b. The Objective	Is it clear cut and in plain view? Is it realistic/attainable? What changes may have to be made?
c. Negotiation	Are there opportunities for a peaceful solution? Are other options now available such as political, economic, or diplomatic efforts which would allow us to conclude military involvement? Is unilateral withdrawal possible?

These criteria include some of the Weinberger Doctrine's six conditions that must be met before military forces are used. What's omitted here is reference to the vital interests of the US, since, for war termination my focus is away from involvement and turned to troop disengagement. Also, not listed is the Weinberger reference to applying sufficient force to give the intention of winning. Once again this statement addresses committing forces not pulling out.

Included from the Weinberger conditions are allied and domestic support which must be constantly reassessed; and the importance of a clearly defined objective. Weinberger's Doctrine emphatically states that force will be undertaken as an instrument of last resort. In the criteria for war termination the combat role is the first to be replaced by diplomacy and unilateral withdrawal if necessary.

Two criteria which are implied but not stated in the Weinberger Doctrine and are time and cost. Based on US war experience and the US approach to war fighting, time and cost are two critical considerations. They are so critical that the proposed definition for LIC includes them as elements. Weinberger's doctrine alludes to them when he cautions that US

involvement must be continously reassessed to keep cause and effect in synchronization.

While other considerations may be developed these offer a starting point for analysis. Moreover, the military situation will affect each of the considerations. It is important that we recognize that military success has a positive influence on the continuation of its use until the original stated objectives are realized. A cautionary note is needed because in war there is always a power imbalance. Consequently the above is true for the stronger side but may not be so for the weaker side. The Viet Cong never enjoyed a military advantage but managed to hold on and to win.

Let's look now at each of the criteria in turn.

The US is not prepared ideologically or morally to conduct protracted struggles unless there is a clear and present danger to National security. The US has shown little or no patience in dealing with LICs. This is a tragedy since LICs normally last some time. The Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare describes 23 recent internal conflicts worldwide.[2] The average number of years these 23 conflicts continued until termination was 8.1 years. The US military experience in Vietnam surpassed that average.

The point here is a significant one and cannot be overemphasized. Future conflicts will be limited but will last some time. There will be no clearly identifiable victor or loser. In fact, LICs normally have no winners. The US may have forces committed into this gray activity zone, with no plan to

terminate the hostilities and no idea of how long the action will last. As we have learned, one of the belligerent's goals is to extend the duration of the hostilities, thereby countering our traditional goal to end conflicts quickly.

Included in this calculus is the time already spent and the best guess about the time still required. As planners we must constantly remind ourselves that US public and congressional support will not last indefinitely. Moreover, it is good to remember that it is better to quit as a result of intention rather than imposition. And clearly, imposition could result from domestic forces more so than a belligerent's military strength.

The next vital criterion is the "cost" of the conflict. Computing the cost involves the utilization of judgment which implies art rather than a science. Clausewitz intimated that war was an act rather than a science. He declared that the term science "should be kept for disciplines such as mathematics and astronomy, whose object is pure knowledge."[3] However, a dichotomy does not exist since art does involve some scientific knowledge. Clausewitz explained and clarified this dichotomy by categorizing war in another way when he wrote: "Rather than comparing it to an art we could more accurately compare it to commerce, which is also a conflict of human interests and activities; and it is still closer to politics, which in turn may be considered as a kind of commerce on a larger scale."[4] Thus war is a branch of social and political theory and should only be considered in the context of politics.

The conclusion is unsettling for those who would want to use calculus to determine when a conflict should end. The theory of war and the evidence of history reveal that measuring cost effectiveness is of limited use in the strategic planning for conflict termination because the possibilities are so influenced by politics. Moreover, I would suggest that the seeming precision of "cost effectiveness" gets in the way of understanding the real problems that involve leaders, history, and value judgments.

The role and political concerns of allies constitute yet another concern. The US stormed into the world power arena in the 1940's and has shouldered the burden at great risk and expense. Involvement in low intensity conflicts are a concern of the United States when "they assault U.S. national interests and the security, values, on political foundations of the United States, our friends and allies."[5]

The responsibility to protect the interests of our allies and to consider their political and economical security when deciding to use military instruments has two consequences in such struggles. In the first instance their support is critical throughout because oftentimes the moral and legal rightness of the use of combat force hinges on their support. And second, any decision to negotiate an end or to end a conflict must include allies, if the US is to retain credibility and dominance.

In On War, Clausewitz reminds us that the use of military power rests on what he called the "remarkable trinity" of people, government, and army. He continues that governments provide

direction and the army provides the means but it is the "passions" of the people that are the very engine of war.[6]

Keeping this point in mind, it should be apparent that the support of the Congress and people are critical. The press play a unique role. They are the linchpin among the elements of the trinity, shaping and molding public opinion. The press then, is a source of information in conflict termination, and a crystal ball for determining where Congress and the people may likely be positioned in the future.

There is a major point learned from the Vietnam War. You can't quantify the importance of the national will, which Clausewitz calls the moral factor, when considering conflict termination. Without the support of the people the continued use of military power will only generate criticism and perpetuate a conflict that has lost its political relevance.

The fifth criterion of the Weinberger Doctrine is that force should serve clearly defined objectives. The objectives may change over time as a result of the cost, changes in allies or domestic support, or a change in the military situation. It is, therefore, necessary to continuously review the objective for rightness and feasibility.

Criterion six is negotiation. Since conflict termination hinges in most cases on negotiation, this consideration is the most difficult and most important. Timing is critical, as well as an understanding of your enemy and his idiosyncrasies.

When to begin negotiations is a thorny problem dependent upon timing. A rational analysis and some consensus are a prerequisite. However, the point to remember is that negotiation

is a two-way process. The enemy is doing his calculations and weighing them against his objectives. He may not be predisposed to consider termination for a number of reasons, most of which are probably ideological, economic, or nationalistic. A call for negotiation may signal disenchantment or weakness and lack of resolve. This is one reason why nations are at times reluctant to enter negotiations. Moreover, the call for negotiations should signal a willingness to employ a combination of political and economic instruments in greater measure.

The best standard regarding when peace should be considered and pursued is provided by Clausewitz when he writes:

> Of even greater influence on the decision to make peace in the consciousness of all the effort that has already been made and of the efforts yet to come. Since war is not an act of senseless passion but is controlled by its political object, the value of this object must determine the sacrifices to be made for it in magnitude and also in duration. Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the value of the political object, the object must be renounced and peace must follow.
>
> We must see then if one side cannot completely disarm the other, the desire for peace on either side will rise and fall with the probability of further successes and the amount of effort these would require. If such incentives were of equal strength on both sides, the two would resolve their political disputes by meeting halfway. If the incentive grows on one side, it should diminish on the other. Peace will result so long as their sum total is sufficient - though the side that feels the lesser urge for peace will naturally get the better bargain.[7]

Clausewitz assumes rationality on the part of the belligerents. This is not an assumption we can make today in dealing with insurgents. Many times we are not dealing with one

actor but rather factions and groups. Human, political and religious values arguably interrupt, even defy, rationality. Michael I. Handel posits that "the absence of a common denominator to measure cost and benefits renders rational calculations impossible."[8] He prefers to deal with perceptions of power as an incentive and an indication of when negotiation should open.

Handel's critical survey of war termination articulates a no nonsense approach for the number of variables involved and schematically represents steps involved in the decision-making process suggesting when negotiations would be possible. He doesn't proffer an approach to make predictions about conflict termination. What he does suggest is that the process of war termination must be thoroughly examined in order to better understand the non-rational elements which undermine our efforts to end conflicts.[9]

In conclusion it is important to note that the recommended analysis whether on the military situation or as it pertains to the vital considerations, is fundamentally subjective and qualitative in nature. Formulas and mathematical theory have utility, however it is the intangible and the intuitive that matter here. It may be useful to apply weights to the vital considerations as Griffith did with his military situation matrix. This sort of analysis and calculation has predictable value, and may lead to additional discussion.

In essence, these tools are designed to promote negotiation and review of the objectives, as well as the decision to use

military ways and means to attain them. Yet, even here, there is considerably more work that needs to be done. Getting into negotiations is just the beginning. The bargaining process that follows is a separate phase of conflict termination proceedings and falls more into the realm of diplomacy and state operations. Military input, however, is essential.

In the past the US has given lip service to the type of analysis being suggested. There are many reasons for this ranging from socio-political through psychological. The only reasonable way to avoid the trap of <u>not</u> thinking about conflict termination is to institutionalize the process from beginning to end.

At this critical juncture, the relationship and interaction between low intensity conflict peculiarities, lack of national will, and war termination needs to be considered. Each of these elements has been presented individually. Their relationship may be intuitive, however, for clarity, an analysis of their dynamics is appropriate for a study of the cessation of hostilities.

CHAPTER IV

ENDNOTES

1. Samuel B. Griffith notes that other criteria, or as he calls them determinants could be developed, however he postulates that the ones he uses are quite valuable and exhaustive enough to predict outcomes in most situations. He used Cuba and Indochina (1954) as examples.

Mao Tse-Tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, Translated and With an Introduction by Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, USMC (Ret). p. 29.

2. Paul A. Jureidine, Norman A. La Charite, Bert H. Cooper, William A. Lybrand, Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts, p. V.

3. Clausewitz, p. 148.

4. Ibid., p. 149.

5. National Security Strategy of the United States, The White House, January 1987, p. 32.

6. Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, Edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, p. 89.

7. Ibid., p. 92.

8. Michael I. Handel, War Termination - A Critical Survey, p. 30.

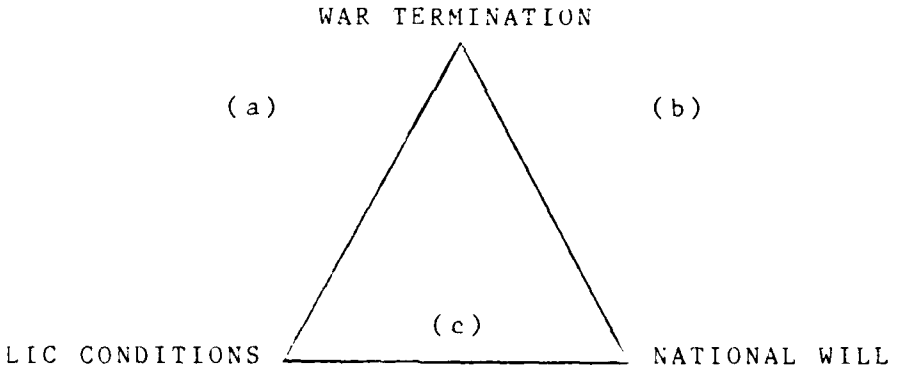
9. Ibid., p. 18.

CHAPTER V

WAR TERMINATION, NATIONAL WILL, AND LIC

A decision to terminate or to continue a war must always be seen as the interplay between the three major elements. As seen as in combination they have a uniqueness and dynamism that both complicates the peace process and explains it. Hence the primary concern of the following pages will be to explain the forces which exert positiive and negative influences on these elements.

The following diagram illustrates the relationship between war termination, LIC conditions, and lack of national will.



The legs of the triangle are labeled a, b, and c to provide reference points for discussion.

The first point is that each element affects and is affected by the other two. The second point is that there is no primary or priority element. Such a diagram has no predictive value. Its major utility is to demonstrate and clarify some of the dilemmas involved in the war termination process.

Any war termination decision is difficult. It is clear that there are numerous considerations for war termination. It is also clear that there is considerable literature and theory about how to identify when and how a war should be terminated. The study of war termination is not an exact science and never will be. Termination of LICs is particularly complicated due to its extreme political nature.

I have emphasized that insurgents have different military objectives from those traditional war objectives. The insurgent attempts to avoid decisive military engagements. He attacks on the flanks and in the rear. He drags out the conflict to preserve his strength, to weaken his enemy, and to gain more time. By gaining time he is able to strengthen his own forces, gain more support, and undermine the will of his adversary. The challenge this strategy poses is double-edged. One side leads to a protracted war from which no one benefits. The other side results in attacks where decisions are speedily attained at the least cost, in areas where there are voids in the stronger adversaries defenses.

The national will is the pivot point for military support. Lacking national will the strongest military forces lose their effectiveness. Moreover, a strong national bias against the use of military force can handicap civilian leadership and reduce the successful use of forces once they are eventually employed.

Leg a of the diagram focuses on the relationship between war termination and LIC conditions. The protracted yet limited LIC condition focuses attention on war termination as an urgent problem. The difficulty the US had ending the Vietnam War

resulted from North Vietnamese strategy and a failure of the US to offer acceptable conditions. No peace is a typical insurgent's response when he believes he can get all that he wants or at least better terms by hanging on and not losing. In any case, the conclusion is that in LICs it is hard to get the other side to accept peace terms when they can win if they simply hold.

Leg b shows the interaction between war termination and national will. War aims must be supported by the people. If not, the aims must be adjusted until they are supported or conflict terminates if possible. When the US government became convinced that it no longer had popular support for the Vietnam war, ways were sought to limit, wind down and stop the war. The British faced the same dilemma in the Boer War and was forced to end that conflict before the enemy was defeated. National will in a democratic government manifests itself through elected officials. During Vietnam many congressmen voiced their opposition to the war because their constituency wanted them too. This situation developed long before a national constituency was mustered to influence the President.

The lack of national will can get a government to seek peace. It can also bring about a change in policy that inhibits the use of force so dramatically that it loses all utility. The US has developed policy based on its failures to terminate conflicts that have hamstrung its foreign policy. It has forced the US to wait for LIC to escalate before intervention to protect vital interests is considered. At this point, intervention has the least opportunity to succeed and war termination becomes a

problem. A vicious circle of violence, rhetoric and prolonged operation results.

Leg c focuses attention on national will and LIC. Once again these two elements act on themselves and are acted on by war termination pressures. As previously discussed, the media has a significant impact on US public opinion and will. The media can erode support among the people, for military use and provide an effective barrier to its employment. LIC is characterized as trading time for space. It also targets the opponents will through successful propaganda campaigns and control of its own media. Since the US has had such great difficulty in sustaining popular support for LICs the problems persist and no one benefits. The USSR has been encouraged by their success in spreading Communism, to support insurgency covertly and overtly, as well as through surrogates. The trend will continue as long as they are successful.

It is impossible to construct a general theory from the relationship. Any generalized theory must be based on a broader study of history. Studies leading to LIC termination theory and more profound relationships have yet to be written. One area that has yet to be investigated is the impact of LIC termination or failure to terminate on the operational level military commander. This issue also concerns the relationship between civil-military leadership and the military. Suffice it to say sometimes the civil leadership may not be willing to terminate a war, if it means acknowledging a failure or losing constituency. The military commander may thus be embroiled in a stalemate war with no prospect for success.

CHAPTER VI

LIC TERMINATION AND THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL COMMANDER

LICs end when there is a agreement between the belligerents to do so. Peace results as an outgrowth of the domestic political situation and when there is internal agreement within the government. This chapter deals in part with the civil-military leadership's acceptance of the operational commanders recommendations to stop fighting. The general supposition is that there is tension between the civilian and field commanders' views. The tension manifests itself in military strategy and objective disagreements and ultimately in how and when negotiations for peace should ensue.

Let's consider the various levels involved in this process.[1] At the top is the civilian political leadership. The president and other members of the National Command Authority (NCA) comprise the top level. The Congress has played a greater role in foreign affairs since Vietnam. The War Powers Resolution places the Congress in a position to influence policy. Below the civil level is the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The field or operational commanders are generally the theater commanders.

The civil leadership views war continuance through a domestic bias and constraints. What is in the nation's interest will be derived in large measure from how they evaluate domestic popular support. The basic issues are elections and the effect war termination or continuance will have on them. Another political concern is support for other issues and domestic

programs. Leslie Gelb and Richard Betts, in their book The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked, progress the hypothesis that the President had popular support for the Vietnam war nationally.[2] Those congressmen that were opposed to it reflected the opinion of their constituencies. It was this group that lead the push for peace once a national consensus was reached.

The next level has two elements. The first is the Joint Chiefs of Staff who have a service perspective and a political-military perspective. The second are the warfighting CINCs who advise the NCA and JCS on the war's conduct. The CINCs deal directly with the field commanders. The JCS fights for the defense position and may be influenced by budgets and postwar missions. The CINCs do a balancing act among the political interests, the service concerns for resources, and the field commanders military objectives.

The lowest level is operational or field command. The operational level is charged with conducting military operations to achieve the military objectives with specific ways and means. The field commander's advice is valuable to the other two levels. The interaction between all three levels is continuous. However, it is a fair conclusion that the operational commander plays a key role throughout the process or at least should.

Each participant views the national interest from their own perspective. They are influenced by their position and their mission as they see it. Thus the local commander sees the national interest from the battlefield. He will know whether the objective can be reached. He will see the casualties first hand.

The morale, readiness, and fighting effectiveness of his forces will be primary concerns as he succeeds or fails to accomplish the mission.

Scholars have written extensively on the bias and tension between these levels. Suffice it to say, it exists. However, for military decisions the operational commander should be considered the expert. The JCS provides checks on the commander's optimism and I would expect they would properly report setbacks. The greatest potential for conflict lies between the civil and operational levels. Vietnam offers many examples of the local commanders questioning the objectives, ways and means. Political concerns allowed the conflict to continue beyond a logical conclusion and against the advice of the military leadership. A more current example was Lebanon in 1983. The President used marines in a defensive position against the advice of the local commander. After the bombing occurred, the US left having achieved little or nothing.

If as I have assumed, the operational commander should be the primary actor in a decision to terminate or continue a war, then there must be a method for the commander to be able to identify conditions which are indicators for war termination or continuance. The first step in such a process is reducing the problem to essentials through a series of questions which are intuitive for the commander and inherent in the planning process.

WAR TERMINATION - FIVE QUESTIONS

Reduced to its essentials the operational commander should consider the following five questions:

1) When should operations be terminated?

2) By what criteria should LIC termination be evaluated?

3) What does LIC termination thinking and planning mean for the commander?

4) How can termination activities and considerations be included in operation plans before the troop deployment and employment?

5) How does operation LIC termination relate to the strategic war termination objectives? How do they differ in the short run? How do they overlap in the long run?

It is clear that the five questions support a structure for LIC termination strategy. The structure rests on shaky ground because civil leadership decides when and how to withdrawal. As I have shown, the civil leadership is influenced by domestic politics more so than the conflict conditions. Any decision to terminate operations are not taken lightly. The military may at any time want to quit if objectives can't be achieved. This is not easy, since termination recommendations are complicated by internal struggles among leaders, and between the military and civil authority. During the Korean War, Ridgeway recognized that victory against Chinese forces was not possible. Therefore he supported efforts toward a negotiated settlement in spite of the influence and power of various government groups. Ridgeway was successful. The French military leadership in Indochina also advised their headquarters and government to sue for peace in 1954 as quickly as possible. Their recommendation was not accepted. History recorded the catastrophe that followed.

When should operations be terminated? The best answer must come from the commander on the spot. It has been argued that the military refuses to admit that a war has been lost or cannot be

decisively won. This assertion may cast a shadow on the military credibility. Significant tension exists in the system to keep the military in line and honest. What is more imperative is for the civil leadership to accept the commander's recommendation to quit a conflict before the optimum point for termination has passed. Given that the commander is not likely to give in quickly or without considerable reflection, it would be prudent for civil leadership to accept his recommendation.

I have discussed the difficulty of doing cost-benefit calculations for a termination decision. Clausewitz says these calculations are impossible. The objectives oftentimes cannot be measured by the same means as the costs of war. Without a common denominator to measure costs and benefits rational calculations are useless. Like many other political activities war termination involves uncertainty and complex human involvement.

The operational commander needs criteria for war termination. These criteria are:

- casualties
- forces morale
- allies support
- US public opinion
- time
- War Powers Resolution.

Several of these criteria are involved in the proposed LIC definition shown in chapter one. Some are also listed in the Weinberger doctrine. The criteria are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Evaluated together they can be used as a warning light.

The casualties criteria can be set before committing troops. Once the level is passed the commander and civil leadership are aware that we may be dealing with a different type of conflict. Closely related to casualties is the morale of troops. This is a qualitative measure. For those of us who have served in command positions, the measuring of morale is intuitive. Morale was a neglected indicator during Vietnam.

Allies support is a post World War II consideration. The US considers allies continuously but particularly in small wars. Sustaining their support reduces the probability of outside intervention and nullifies propaganda.

The US public opinion is crucial. The Weinberger Doctrine and the President's Strategic Guidance for FY 88 precludes military use if the public does not support it. For the commander preparing for and dealing with the day to day operations, intelligence about US public opinion can't be dismissed.

The final two criteria are time and the War Powers Resolution. The War Powers Resolution limits combat troop employment without a declaration of war to ninety days. The commander's responsibility is clear in this case. He provides advice on whether the objectives can be achieved within the specific time frames. Confronted with a LIC operation of high uncertainty, the commander must avoid overstating the threat as a hedge against failure. Time can be a two-edged sword. With the upper limits established by the Resolution, the commander must avoid underestimating or overstating the time required. Optimism

and pessimism have dire consequences for foreign policy objectives and civilian confidence in the military.

The next question is what does war termination thinking and planning mean to the commander? Basically, it means a more pragmatic approach when recommending force and requesting peace when victory is not possible. The commander will come to see success not as victory but rather in terms of limiting casualties, sustaining public support, and minimizing the time involved. The philosophy of winning will be replaced by a "not losing" mentality. This may be a more acceptable approach to LIC fighting because the operational level commander will tend to be less optimistic about his chances of success. It also means that the commander will have more flexibility in dealing with the civil-military hierarchy. The flexibility arises from confidence that he is not expected to achieve the impossible.

If war termination planning is so important then how do we get commanders to consider it before operations commence? The answer is straightforward. A Conflict Termination Appendix could be included in the Operations Annex of the military plan to the national counterinsurgency plan. It would thus become the comprehensive document described by Clausewitz when he wrote:

> War plans cover every aspect of a war, and weave them all into a single operation that must have a single, ultimate objective in which all particular aims are reconciled.[3]

Instituting this requirement could influence and lead to different strategy and objectives. Review of the Appendix would be mandated based on War Powers Resolution time frames. A sample format for the Appendix is furnished in Appendix I of this paper.

The proposed War Termination Appendix poses a series of questions. The questions restate the commanders criteria for conflict termination. By preparing answers to the questions an analyst will identify specific problem areas that would adversely impact on the operation's ultimate termination. When the Appendix is updated the review process focuses on the continuation or ending of hostilities.

The fifth question investigates LIC termination as a problem in the short run of strategic and operational level differences. The strategic level considers LIC termination in three ways. First, will termination or continuance impact on elections and party strength? Second, they will be concerned with their support on other issues. This is particularly true during LICs when politics is going on as usual and the political leadership is concerned about other programs. Third, they will view termination from the perspective of what the nation will support and what is feasible.

The operational level commander, on the other hand, is concerned about LIC termination in three different ways. He affects and is affected by mission accomplishment. Thus he will look at termination in terms of what he was asked to do and whether or not he accomplished it or can accomplish it. In all likelihood the military commander will also see the operation as vital to US interests and security. Termination will hinge on the strength of the link between the military objectives and national interests as he perceives them. Third, and most important after the mission for war termination at the operational level is the welfare and morale of the troops. The

casualty issue and popular opinion dramatically influence these concerns.

In the short run, the differences between the operational level LIC termination view and the political-strategic level view is politics versus military issues. There is overlap in the long run, however. Both levels understand that if the LIC goes on too long there will be growing disaffection in the US leading to a forced withdrawal and anti-military feeling. The conduct of foreign policy and world opinion are also viewed with concern and impact on LIC termination. Finally, the operational and political strategic level may come to believe in the long run that the future of the country, that is US vital interests, or some higher ideal is linked to ending hostilities.

The termination system is interactive and wrought with tension. Individual perspectives and outlooks are based on position. In the short run there are differences between levels. However it is when the groups determine that ending a LIC is in the overall national interest that the probability for termination increases. Termination planning is a proactive and reactive activity. When done before troops are employed you have a peace plan. After time has passed and conditions change, reviews conducted against termination criteria become the basis for a termination decision and strategy.

CHAPTER VI

ENDNOTES

1. Morton H. Halperin's article entitled War termination as a Problem in Civil - Military Relations in The Annuals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. How Wars End. November 1970 provides an excellent theory on how various groups influence decisions regarding war termination. Although I agree with this basic premise that there is tension among the levels based on their perspective, I do not agree with his conclusion that pressure to end wars will usually come from civilians who will need the support of the general staff (JCS) to overrule the field commander. pp. 86-95.

2. Gelb and Betts, p. 366.

3. Clausewitz, p. 579.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper addressed the problem of LIC termination. It began by redefining LIC because of the ambiguity created with the current definition. Unfortunately, no definitive answer was provided to the questions how and when does a nation end a LIC? However, there are some basic conclusions that can be derived from this single study. To start, there is still a need for more specific analysis and literature to be written within the general war termination field. Such subjects might include the military's perceptions, the impact of the media, and the role of domestic politics, as well as other similar subjects.

I have emphasized the barriers to LIC termination. These barriers have received inadequate attention in war termination studies. Also, there is an inherent syngerism in the barriers which when combined excerbate the war termination dilemma. It must be remembered that concluding war is as much an art as waging war. The personality, attitude, and behavior of the civilian and military leadership undermine the possibility of understanding and predicting termination outcomes. In addition to the influence of individual leadership characteristics, organizational perspectives and dynamics play a role. The theater commander's war termination outlook in all likelihood will differ from the JCS member and certainly from the civilian policy makers.

The US LIC termination experience has spawned a progression of doctrines and law which have sought to restrain military use as a method for avoiding the LIC termination problem. This misguided doctrine has handicapped policy makers. Because of an inability to end LICs, we have all but eliminated military force as a means to cope with insurgency even when it may threaten US national security interests.

It is our duty as military leaders to study how to end LICs. The study should begin with an examination of the process and lead to a national strategy for war termination. The strategy's capstone should be a War Termination Doctrine.

Plans and procedures fill capability gaps. Since the nation is unlikely to quickly solve the LIC termination problem, I recommend that a LIC Termination Appendix be added to the Operations Annex of the Army's Counterinsurgency Plan. The preparation of the plan would force military commanders to think beyond the conflict to its end and beyond.

I also recommend that the senior level war colleges teach war termination theory and provide case studies. Students should be encouraged to study and write on the subject. Their past experiences coupled with study and education should lead to a slow and gradual increase in military subjects papers on war termination. These papers may eventually be of considerable value to the civilian policy makers.

Finally, military attitudes toward warfighting and winning will have to change. Conflicts of the future will test our will more than our ability to fight, and our willingness to accept a

military objective that avoids losing rather than striving for winning. Attitudes change slowly, however evidence suggests that a change is taking place. The military, particularly the future commanders at theater, CINC, and JCS level must sprint to the front. There is little or no opportunity for a decisive military victory in low-intensity conflicts. When a decisive victory is not possible, the planning for war needs a plan for peace. As Sun Tzu wrote in 500 BC, "There has never been a protracted war from which a country has benefited."[1]

CHAPTER VII

ENDNOTES

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APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX I

A PROPOSED CONFLICT TERMINATION APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION

This appendix contains information important for conflict termination for the US military and host nation governments. It provides general guidelines and guidance. Before forces are deployed to achieve US national objectives, a detailed analysis of the military objectives and the criteria for conflict termination must be reflected upon.

It should be clearly understood that this evaluation is critical and should be continuous. The nature of LIC operations requires that special attention be given to conflict termination. The nation that plans for conflict termination well and tackles the plan with courage, intelligence, and energy is on the way to success.

PRINCIPLES

In considering when to use or terminate the use of military force a number of key criteria must be take into account and a written assessment prepared. They are:

- Enemy military situation, strength and disposition.

- Our force and allies situation strength and disposition and morale.

- The National Policy Objective and military objective. The question needs to be asked whether the objectives are suitable, feasible, and attainable.

- Human Cost. What is the probability that lives will be lost or casualties endured? How many people are we prepared to lose or to inflict on our adversary? How much collateral damage to non-combatants is expected or has occurred.

- Economic Cost. What will the military effect cost the treasury? How much has it cost so far and what is the projected cost? Can the government afford the commitment?

- Public Support. Do we have it? Prognosis for the future -- terminate if it is lost.

- Geo-Political. Does this conflict have world order or power considerations? Is escalation probable? Are we making and keeping our friends and allies?

- Ideological and Moral High Ground. Are human rights being violated? How are we perceived by those in the international community?

- Time. How long do we think military force will be needed? If it takes too long then we must extricate ourselves through negotiations if possible. Security of committed forces and the host must be considered.

- War Powers Resolution Impact.

These principles are interrelated and mutually reinforcing indicators of where we are going, where we have been, and where we are in a conflict. While no single principle to which an unacceptable condition may exist or be created should by itself be cause not to use force or to terminate its use, each one is an indicator of a possible problem or potential shift in fortunes which cannot be lightly dismissed.

RESPONSE

After the key criteria are reviewed and before military force is used; a written analysis is prepared. A recommendation to the NCA should either agree or disagree with the use of force. Detailed rationale should justify the position. If planners agree that military force should be used then qualitative,

subjective statements should be prepared for each criteria and be attached herein. The statements should include conditions and milestones wherein negotiations should be initiated or forces withdrawn unilaterally. For example if a certain number of casualties, say 10,000 in three months, are reached then we negotiate a cease fire and attempt a withdrawal. Or if domestic or international support is lost then we curtail, or end involvement, or attempt to reverse the opinions.

COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS

This analysis will be prepared prior to deployment of military forces and reviewed and updated every 30 days thereafter. The NCA's review and signature of all parties are required for the initiation and subsequent review. The board will attach a summary along with their recommendations and milestones that indicate our long range objective. This paragraph must be prepared with the State Department for it envisions the future. By doing so, the peace process becomes an integral part or tool towards building long term relationships.

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